

Bay County Extension Council

**Minutes
May 20, 2009**

Date: May 20, 2009

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Place: MSU Extension Bay County, Third Floor, Large Conference Room

Member(s) Present:

Philip Englehardt
Marybeth Laisure

Bill Palmer

Doug Rise

Member(s) Excused:

Mary Jo Brandt
Patti Dubay

George Heron
Lyle LeCronier

Sara Marks
Barb Wishowski

Others Present:

Judy Delestowicz, Administrative Assistant
Jan Rise, Master Gardener Volunteer Program Coordinator
Jodi Schulz, 4-H Youth Development Extension Educator
Howard Wetters, County Extension Director

Others Excused:

Ann Arnold, FCS Extension Educator
Margaret LaShore, SNAP-Ed Educator, Reporting & Technology

INFORMATION PRESENTED AND DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

Doug Rise called the meeting to order at 5:20 p.m.

Mr. Wetters offered that he is excited about an opportunity to apply for ARRA (America Recovery and Reinvestment Act), or federal stimulus funds, to build non-profit board governance. This would be a good opportunity for MSU Extension Bay County to gain funding to provide educational opportunities on capacity building for local non-profit groups. The proposal is due in July.

The minutes of the March 18, 2009, meeting were approved. There were no new items added to the agenda.

Old Business:

The Plan of Work results were briefly reviewed. The idea of a community food discussion was the clear winner toward new programming efforts FY 2010. A quick discussion was had on the new vegetable garden located on the Bay County Fairgrounds. This is a venture between Bay County and Mr. Dave Rogers. Mr. Wetters reported that there is talk about organizing a Community Garden task force

in Bay County.

The Plan of Work will be further discussed at the next regular business meeting, due to low Council member turn out today.

A report on building partnerships between Extension and policymakers (handout) was provided to Council, "Building Political Support for Extension Challenges for Today," February 14, 1998, North Central Region Leadership Workshop, Joint Council of Extension Professionals. Also handed out, a "Citizens Guide for Communicating with Elected Officials," for Council's handbook. This was in response to Council's wish to draft a letter of support to the Bay County Board of Commissioners about the valued educational programs MSU Extension Bay County delivers in Bay County. A draft letter of support was reviewed and approved. An updated copy of the "Bay County Directory of Government & School Officials" was also provided for Council member handbooks.

Also tabled to a future meeting, the presentation by Jan Rise on the Downtown Bay City Farmers Market (DBCFCM). The DBCFCM opens tomorrow, May 21, at it's new location at the corner of 6th and Washington streets.

New Business:

The "Report To The County Executive, First Quarter 2009," was provided to Council members in attendance.

Mr. Wetters reported that MSU Extension has withdrawn it's offer to Brian Daley in filling the vacant ANR Extension educator position for Bay and Arenac counties on a permanent basis. Mr. Daley's ended his temporary assignment in March. Subsequently, MSU Extension has pulled its funding (50 percent) for this full-time position. The county's funding support is still in place till December 2009. Mr. Wetters is working to find other funding levels to keep this position in, at least, Bay County, and has asked MSU Extension to put the action on hold.

Other items to report under Grants and Staffing, two grant proposals are being applied for this month: Better Kid Care and Parenting Education. Also, interviews are to be held soon for the new Extension educator position funded by PIE grant dollars. MSU Extension Bay County has the opportunity to get two summer youth worker positions through an agreement between Bay County and Michigan WORKS! The summer youth workers working the MSU Extension Bay County office and would also intern between the 4-H and DBCFCM program areas.

The Bay County Division on Aging has received ARRA funds, and will be providing an additional \$3,000 in Senior Project FRESH coupons in cooperation with MSU Extension Bay County to qualifying senior citizens.

The DBCFM has received a \$1,000 grant from the Bay Area Community Foundation to market to Bridge Card users. There was some general discussion from Council on their support of the market and the new growing season.

Ms. Jodi Schulz gave an update on 4-H events. With receiving a 4-H Participation Fees mini-grant from the state 4-H office, Ms. Schulz was able to put together a Helmet Safety kit for each Bay County 4-H horse riding club. Kit contents were identified and how-to training begins this week for all club leaders.

MSU Extension Bay County had a huge success in delivering it's Character Counts! curriculum to Hampton Elementary. Ms. Jodi Wrzesinski, 4-H program assistant, worked with all of Hampton Elementary's 4th and 5th grade classes in preparing a play about what they learned from Character Counts! and presented it at a school assembly. The play and the curriculum was well received by students and teachers.

Horsemanship For Handicappers (HFH) just ended it's 6-week-long spring class.

A 4-H shooting sports club received a mini-grant from local 4-H Participation Grant funds to purchase archery equipment, which will support a new event planned for this year's fair.

Upcoming program events are Cloverbud Camp planned for the week of June 16-19 and Exploration Days, held on the campus of MSU, June 24-26.

New events being planned for fair this year are a shooting sports (archery) youth tournament and a llamas and alpacas show (non-market).

State premiums have been eliminated due to state budget cuts, but the Bay County Fair Board will cover all premiums for youth at this year's fair.

Ms. Schulz reported on planned 4-H community projects. The annual grounds clean-up event at Camp Fishtales is coming up. At the same time, 4-H clubs are also going to be working with MSU Extension Bay County SNAP-Ed/BFI staff in sewing diaper bags to support breastfeeding in our community. Bay County Farm Bureau has been able to double the number of chicks provided to 4-H youth for this year's Harvest For All project. Chicks raised in this program will go to food banks at Good Samaritan and the Bay County Women's Shelter after they are processed. The Harvest For All project in Bay County was mentioned by Dr. Coon in his May 7, 2009, e-mail newsletter *Spotlight*.

Mr. Wetters offered that Ms. Schulz's 6-year continuing employment process through MSU Extension has been reviewed at the state-level. While he can't say what the outcome will be, all review groups have indicated that her application was

stellar and her application has been requested to be used as a model for other Extension educators who will be going through the process in the future. Kudos to Jodi Schulz.

Some discussion centered around the recent health fair held at Western High School. The event's focus was making healthy living and good choices for the high school's ninth graders. MSU Extension Bay County and the Michigan Nutrition Network (MNN), an MSU Extension program area, is working with Bay Arenac ISD to bring SPLASH (Shaping Positive Lifestyles and Attitudes through School Health) curriculum in the schools. Marybeth Laisure stated that the Y is getting a grant for a health fair in the fall, MSU Extension Bay County could join.

Under Agriculture and Natural Resources programming, Mr. Wetters said that if the vacant ANR Extension educator position is not filled, he will take over those duties in Bay County. No test seed plots are planned in Bay County; however, research-based test plot data from Tuscola and Huron counties will be published.

Jan Rise, Master Gardener volunteer program coordinator, reported on the Master Gardener recognition banquet held May 13, 2009. Kip Cronk, MDEQ Land and Water Management district representative and Bay County Master Gardener, was the guest speaker. Mr. Cronk gave a presentation on native plant identification and invasive species in the Saganing Preserve. Resource 'pocket' cards with contact information have been provided to all Master Gardeners. The MDOT I-75 Linwood rest stop spring planting blitz is scheduled for May 30. MDOT had planned to redesign the beds, but that has been put on hold due to state funding. There may be another opportunity at the beginning of the budget year in October. Ms. Rise reported that the first Master Gardener newsletter was mailed out in April, with two other newsletters planned during the summer months. Mary Wilson, the new Master Gardener state coordinator, has unveiled a new information Website on the MSU Extension Portal titled Gardening in Michigan. (www.migarden.msu.edu/) Ms. Wilson is looking for input from Master Gardeners by way of an IPM survey. Survey results will be used in writing a 'best practices' program guide standard, which Master Gardeners can use when they are out in the public.

As Ann Arnold, Extension educator, could not attend, Mr. Wetters reported that the Healthy Toddlers research program is still going strong; early results show it has been very effective in changing eating habits in small children. Project FRESH and Senior Project FRESH coupon programs will begin again soon. The first class starts in early June. Mr. Wetters said that there is a funding opportunity to bring more Senior Project FRESH coupons into the community this season for eligible clients. The breast-feeding friendly diaper bag project is still going strong. Volunteer hours go toward match effort to support our nutrition (SNAP-Ed) programs.

Under Community and Economic Development, Mr. Wetters said that power and phone lines are up and running for opening day of the Downtown Bay City Farmers Market tomorrow. Still need water in the new location, but community feedback is good on the new location.

Mr. Wetters said that MSU Extension Bay County is going forward with the community food conversation, including developing community gardens, as part of our local programming.

The next meeting will be held at the 2009 Bay County Fair and Youth Exposition. More particularly, the same night as the annual 4-H Livestock Auction on Thursday, August 13. This informal meeting will start at our regular meeting time of 5:15 p.m. at the livestock buyer's reception area by the livestock arena. Mr. Rise adjourned the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

ACTION TAKEN

- It was moved, supported, and carried to approve the March 18, 2009, meeting minutes.
- It was moved, supported, and carried to approve draft letter supporting the programming efforts of MSU Extension Bay County to community legislators.
- Meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

FOLLOW UP NEEDED

- Review Plan of Work results and discuss new opportunities for year 2009-2010.
- Reschedule presentation on Downtown Bay City Farmer's Market.

Prepared by J. Delestowicz